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SHOPPING SURPRISES

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HISTORY

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favoured in past

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Blossom Valley Singers
greet season with song

FEATURE

Annual nativity exhibit
on display at church

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Trish Drinkle photo

COVER: SHOPPING SURPRISES

Creston Valley merchants have you covered this holiday season, offering the best in electronics, gift baskets, active wear and toys to stimulate creativity in all ages.



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Tigz Designs owner Lori Cameron.

Downtown Shopping Treasures

Story and photos by: Trish Drinkle

Christmas shopping can be trying time for those who live in a small town. The biggest frustration is surrounded by a lack of selection and competitive pricing, which prompts some to shop online or make the trek to larger centres. This Christmas, however, be prepared to have your Christmas socks knocked off, for Creston retailers are bringing it with gusto! Creston consumers have asked and retailers

have responded in a big way with unsurpassed selection and excellent consumer pricing. Here are a few of the local hidden treasures you have to look forward to this holiday shopping season.

Did you know that Creston Card and Stationery is host to the largest toy store selection in the Kootenays? It has not only the everyday types of toys you would expect, but Kootenay kids-type of toys focused on learning, creativity and endless hours of fun.

“We wanted to our customers and their children to have toys with better quality play value, toys that last, and enrich the creative soul,” says owner Mike Poznikoff.

Brace yourself. When you walk down the stairs into Toyland, your jaw will drop. Traditional toys such as car model kits, Lego sets and board games are plentiful, but there is so much more, with aisles of unique toys for every child, even the big kids in your life, such



as expanded paper crafts, including card making kits and supplies inspiring personalized greeting cards. With the endless craft selection, Christmas truly can get back to basics with home made cards and meaningful presents from the heart. The selection is endless, and the choices are spectacular at Creston Card and Stationery.

**“We wanted to
our customers
and their
children to have
toys with
better quality
play value, toys
that last, and
enrich the
creative soul.”
—Mike Poznikoff**

A small sample of what's available at Creston Card and Stationery (above) and Lectric Ave. (below).



Did you know that the Source has the largest selection of headphones in the Kootenays? Others drive an hour, only to stand in line outdoors with hopes of purchasing the latest and greatest Xbox, Xbox 360 and PlayStation 4 console games; the Source has these new releases available in store here in Creston, even collector editions such as Halo 5. With a huge selection of televisions and audio-video equipment, along with unique and techy stocking stuffers, why leave home when the Source has everything you need at its Canyon Street location? Did someone say drone camera? (Hint, hint.)

Did you know that Tigz Designs and Tea Hut has one of the largest



Activity Base owner Carrie Czar.

selections of loose-leaf tea blends in the Kootenays, approaching 300 unique blends along with some of the most unique and delicious gift ideas on the planet? Try one of their chocolate delicacies and you will be moved to tears. Tigz can create a custom gift basket for your loved one, and some baskets with a retail value over \$75 can be shipped free to locations across B.C. and Alberta. Shipping is available all across Canada.

Lectric Ave. is the source for GoPro cameras for your snowmobiler, ATVer, hunter, downhill mountain biker and street bike rider so they can capture adventures easily with the push of a button. For the big kid in your family, check out the Traxxas remote control cars. Lectric Ave. is the certified Apple dealer in our area.

Many Kootenay families find themselves juggling a tight budget for Christmas. One of the biggest incentives for raising families in the valley would be the unlimited adventure in the back country and endless sports activities offered. Carrie Czar has the perfect solution for sporty outdoorsy families.

"I'm a mother, with very athletic children, so I get it," she says. "We all want our kids to have the best quality equipment possible, but sometimes the price tags that go along with snow boards and skis and other gear can make us cringe."

Her solution? Her store, Activity Base, has the highest quality pre-owned sports equipment in fantastic condition waiting for people of all ages. From snowboards and skis to skates and golf equipment, the whole family can be outfitted for family

adventure and fun for a fraction of the cost.

"Kids grow incredibly fast, and before you know it they're into another size of board or skate," she says. "I love being able to provide this option for our Creston shoppers."

Activity Base also has an excellent selection of new clothing lines, as well as swim suits and yoga wear.

These hidden shopping treasures are just the tip of the iceberg. Creston shopping has never been so epic with so many options. We want you, Creston shoppers and retailers, to send us your hidden treasures so we can feature more businesses on our I Love Creston Facebook page. Send staff writer Trish Drinkle your epic finds at trish@ilovecreston.com so we can celebrate shopping local together. ■

The Many Shapes of Tradition

Story by: Naomi Larsen

Photos by: Jeff Banman

For many families, a Christmas crèche or nativity scene in the home is a tradition. Nestled on the mantel or on a table, under a branch of evergreens, a crèche symbolizes the essence of Christmas for many.

At the Creston Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Cultural Hall, fans of crèches can find something enchanting at the church's annual crèche display. This year the event will include an estimated 275 different models representing dozens of different countries.

Crèches from as far away as Israel, Peru and Australia are being featured at the church as part of the annual exhibition taking place throughout the end of November and beginning of December.

"They come in all different shapes and sizes," organizer and First Assistant



“They come in all different shapes and sizes.”

to the High Priest Group Leader Eric Viklund said, adding the smallest is a 1.5-inch olive wood carving crèche from Israel. “But we also had a 27-piece Avon collection that was gathered over about a 10-year period.”

Viklund said there is also a crèche constructed entirely out of fine porcelain and sets made out of paper.

Viklund, who started the event with his wife more than a decade ago, said each

nativity scene has a story connected to it and they try to share those stories with the public via display cards.

Now in its 13th year, the exhibition’s crèches are all loaned from residents in the community and church members. One scene in particular heralds from Peru and is created out of baked clay while another is themed as Inuit.

“Instead of having donkeys and camels, they had bears and caribou,” Viklund said.





“There are so many different imaginations going into these. Each culture seems to interpret it a little differently and so that’s part of the interest.”

The displays are all highlighted with more than 1,000 white Christmas lights, which creates a lovely ambiance, Viklund said.

“When people walk into the hall, a lot of people step in the door and gasp — it just hits them,” he said. “It’s really something people enjoy. It’s really quite impressive.”

Viklund said the display is different every year as new sets are continuously being loaned to the church for the event.

“It’s never the same,” he said.

The exhibition is free of charge although no one will want to leave without putting a few coins in the donation box.

The display will be open to the public the last Friday, Saturday and Sunday in November and the first weekend in December.

The event is also wheelchair accessible. ■

For more information, contact Viklund at 250-428-7919 or visit the church located at 1010 36th Avenue North in Erickson.



THE CRÈCHE AT A GLANCE

Whether called the French crèche, the Italian presipio, the German krippe or the Spanish nacimiento, the depiction of the nativity scene is one of the oldest and most beloved Christmas traditions. A crèche is a three-dimensional artistic representation of the birth of Jesus.


St. Francis of Assisi is credited with popularizing the crèche tradition. In 1223, he was traveling to the Italian village Greccio, when the sight of shepherds in moonlit fields evoked images of the first Christmas.

Inspired by the midnight scene, St. Francis beckoned villagers that Christmas Eve to light the sky with their torches, bring their animals and re-enact the Nativity during succeeding centuries, the tradition spread from Italy to France and Germany, and then from Europe to other continents. The art form flourished in homes and churches, among kings and commoners.

Whether scenes of the 19th century Italian villagers dressed in silks and jewels or contemporary African animal herders formed in clay, each crèche reflects that time and culture of the artist and draws the viewer to Jesus.

“There are so many different imaginations going into these. Each culture seems to interpret it a little differently and so that’s part of the interest.”

Photographer for Hire





Jeff Banman - 250.402.6482

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Official game photographer of the
Creston Valley Thunder Cats



From the Mayor's Desk

Story by: Ron Toyota,
Mayor of the Town of Creston

Mayor's Challenge

My mayor's challenge is to raise over \$6,000 to support the local food bank and the Creston Ministerial Association's Christmas hamper program.

The CP Rail Holiday Train is arriving — raising money, food and awareness!

On Monday, Dec. 14 at 10 a.m., our community will once again be treated to a free CP Holiday Train musical performance — don't miss out! The train will pull in behind Millennium Park, so come down and enjoy the entertainment on the outdoor portable stage. This year's performers are Kelly Prescott, Devin Cuddy, Jim Cuddy and the fabulous Holiday Train Band!

Our community has been fortunate to see the CP Holiday Train stop

here in 2009, 2011 and 2013. The two brightly lit trains start off in the Montreal area in November, and visit approximately 150 communities on the cross country journey.

To make the event even more memorable, CP Rail Holiday Train organizers will be presenting a cheque to the local Gleaners Food Bank fund. What a way to get into the spirit of giving!

My mayor's challenge is to raise over \$6,000 to support the local food bank and the Creston Ministerial Association's Christmas hamper program. In past years, over

\$25,000 has been raised for these two very worthwhile programs. I will personally be giving \$500 to these worthy causes and it is my challenge to everyone to contribute what they can. For those able to give \$20 or more, a tax deductible receipt will be available.

A huge shout out to the many of you already supporting other campaigns

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by donating to the Creston Valley Advance greeting card and other local fundraising initiatives. Together we can make a difference! And remember that while simple acts of kindness don't

garner a tax receipt, they can make a huge difference in the lives of our neighbours and friends. Merry Christmas and season's greetings!

Please bring or mail your donation to Town Hall — thank you! ■

Reach Ron Toyota by phone at 250-428-2214, e-mail at Ron.Toyota@creston.ca or online at www.creston.ca.



Submitted photo

Mayor Ron Toyota on the CP Rail Holiday Train in 2013.



Take a moment... PAWS and give.

During the month of December 5% of all annual exams will be donated to PAWS, our local animal shelter.

PAWS is a volunteer based organization committed to finding safe, loving, forever homes for abused, abandoned, stray and unwanted animals in the Creston Valley. Donations to SNAP gratefully accepted also.

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Message from the Chief

Story by: Jason Louie, Chief, Lower Kootenay Band

Holiday Reflection

With the holiday season approaching, I take some time to reflect and wish to share some personal perspectives. Growing up at the Lower Kootenay Band, the holiday season was a difficult time. We did not have a lot of wealth nor did many people at

Lower Kootenay. There was, however, celebration with an abundance of food. The children would sing Christmas carols and the smell of food filled the one-room band office. Everyone knew times were tough but it seemed that there were other priorities like ensuring everyone would have enough to eat. Santa Claus would make an appearance handing out a candy bag to each child. Sometimes, there would even be a \$1 or \$2 bill in the bag. Yes, remember the \$1 and \$2 bills?

I think about the present day and our state of affairs. I am not going to convince my community about how good or how bad Yaqaan Nukiy is. The truth of the matter is I have some good people around me who make me look good at the appropriate times. The acquisition of Ainsworth Hot Springs, the property near Burden's Cut, the round house, the addition to the Yaqaan Nukiy School and the health building. There are many people behind the scenes who work very hard to make good things happen. They believe in a dream of something bigger and something better for the Lower Kootenay Band.

Contrary to popular belief I do not live for the spotlight. In a public setting my heart is racing and I do what I need to do to deliver whatever the message may be. Observe the public relations pictures. I am not smiling in many of them but know that this is a very necessary part of the job. What I wish to do now is pay tribute to the LKB's hard working staff: the administration assistant, who makes the coffee every morning not because she has to but she knows people like to drop by for a cup of coffee, and our director

of finance, who does an outstanding job of managing and balancing our budgets. Sometimes we may overlook the janitorial staff. They make our facilities look immaculate! At the end of the day I scan my office and think what can I do to make their job a little bit easier and tidy up as best I can.

During this holiday season, I reflect on how things used to be. They are good memories but it saddens me that we may never go back to the way things were. I give thanks to a staff that does not always receive the gratitude that they deserve. I address the Yaqaan Nukiy citizens with a message of hope and goodwill. To the LKB council, 2016 will bring many challenges but if we meet these challenges together we can achieve greatness not for us but for the people that we serve. It appears that we have succeeded in bridging the gap between the LKB and Creston Valley community. This bridging must be ongoing. No longer are we the mystery neighbours who live down the road. I am greeted with, "Hello, chief," "Hello, Mr. Louie," even a, "Hello, sir." The looks of fear are becoming more and more seldom when an indigenous person crosses paths with our neighbours.

Happy holidays or merry Christmas! Maybe your family does not celebrate this occasion but I wish to spread a message of goodwill to all. It is not what kind of material things that I can give but the acts of kindness that are free. Time seems to fly by as I get older. This time is precious. This time is limited. I have an attitude of gratitude. I don't know why we were all born into this world but I know that it is something to be grateful for. Happy holidays to all and a very prosperous New Year! ■

Reach Jason Louie by phone at 250-428-4428 ext. 235, e-mail at mjasonlouie@gmail.com or online at www.lowerkootenay.com.

Come out & cheer on your local Junior B Team!

December Home Games

Saturday, December 5
vs Golden 7:30
(TEDDY BEAR TOSS NIGHT)

Wednesday, December 9
vs Kimberley 7:30
(MINOR HOCKEY NIGHT)

Friday, December 18
vs Kimberley 7:30
(JERSEY NIGHT)
#17 Jesse Collins
Jersey Retirement Ceremony

Thursday, December 31
vs Fernie 7:30

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Visit us online at www.crestonvalleythundercats.com

At the gate admission:
Adult (19-64) \$10
Senior (65+) \$8 Youth (6-18) \$6
Family (2 adults + 2 youth) \$25
each additional youth \$4

WINTER SAFETY

The winter season is the worst season for fires in Canada. That is why we must be mindful of the importance of fire prevention and safety. During the winter, we must heat our homes, most of our meals are prepared and eaten indoors, our clothing is dried indoors and people who smoke tend to do so indoors. Be prepared for the winter and remember that:

- Heating appliances such as space heaters should not have anything combustible close by and need at least one metre (three feet) of space around them. Inspect the electrical cord attached. If it overheats, you have a fire hazard. Keep young children away from them.
- Electrical and heating systems can fail and become fire hazards. Ensure they are regularly checked by a professional, especially prior to the winter season when fireplaces, heaters, appliances and other electrical equipment are in maximum use.
- Smoking while in bed, tired or under the influence of alcohol or medication is the most common cause of fires that kill.
- Most chimney fires occur with wood-burning fireplaces. Ensure chimneys are cleaned and professionally inspected regularly. Burn only small quantities of wood at a time.
- Teach children that fire is not a toy; it is a tool we use to cook food and heat our homes.
- Educate your children about the dangers of fire and make sure they know that all fires, even small ones, can spread very quickly.
- Never use a flammable liquid near a flame or source of spark. Beware of hidden sources of sparks like water heater pilot lights, electric motors or heaters. Never smoke while pouring or using flammable liquids.
- If even a small doubt exists about any appliance/equipment that you use, do not hesitate to contact a qualified technician. It may save your life, and the lives of your loved ones.

FIREPLACE SAFETY:

- A Fireplace becomes dangerous when accumulated tar or creosote catches fire or from uncontrolled burning or over-fuelling. Other causes of fireplace-related fires are substandard design or installation and lack of safety precautions.
- Open the damper before lighting the fire, and keep it open until the ashes are cool enough to touch.
- Ensure the fire is completely out before going to bed or leaving the house.
- Do not store combustible materials such as paper or wood too close to the fireplace.
- Use a screen in front of the fireplace opening to protect children and to prevent embers from escaping and igniting carpets, etc.
- Never leave children alone near a fireplace.
- Use dry, well-seasoned wood in small amounts.
- Have chimneys cleaned and serviced at regular intervals by a professional.
- Never overload your fireplace.
- Never use charcoal starter fluids, gasoline or any flammable substance to start fires.
- When using artificial logs, burn only one at a time and follow instructions on the wrapping.
- Always place the ashes in a metal container and take them outside the house.

THE DANGERS OF EXTENSION CORDS:

- Extension cords are a common cause of electrical fires. That is why you must be careful to use only extension cords that are rated for the power used by the device they are powering.
- Extension cords must never be run inside walls or under rugs or furniture. They can be damaged by traffic or heavy furniture and start arcing, which can lead to a fire.
- Extension cords can get warm during use and must be able to dissipate this heat or they can start a fire.



CRESTON VALLEY

TOWN of CRESTON

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Story by: Tammy Hardwick

Manager - Creston & District Museum & Archives

No Love for Nationalities

When we look at the population of the Creston Valley, especially in the early years, we see a population that is very strongly British in origin. The vast majority of the local settlers traced their roots back to England, Ireland or Scotland, and a goodly number of them were first-generation immigrants.

This nationalist dominance shows up everywhere. Local festivals and celebrations were heavily influenced by British traditions — Victoria Day and July 12 (celebrating Britain's Glorious Revolution in 1690) are a couple of examples. The rush of young men signing up for overseas service in the First World War, and to some extent in the Second World War, was fueled in part by a desire to fight for their king (George V) and country (Britain). Newspapers regularly report visits of local citizens to the "Old Country," parcel-mailing deadlines to reach Britain in time for Christmas, and even overseas telephone calls made by local people to friends and family in Britain.

This is not to say that the Creston Valley population was uniformly British — far from it. But other nationalities scarcely register.

Celebrations of the Chinese New Year, for example, are noted only occasionally and even then merit only a single line in the papers. Most other references to the local Chinese population are dismissive at best and downright derogatory at worst.

If, in the eyes of a very pro-British population, Chinese people were second-class citizens, the First Nations people were a very distant third.

The Ktunaxa population fares even worse: very few mentions at all, and those few are almost uniformly denigrating. If, in the eyes of a very pro-British population, Chinese people were second-class citizens, the First Nations people were a very distant third.

Even other European nationalities, while not subject to the same kind of prejudices as Chinese and Ktunaxa people, tended to be overlooked. For the British majority, the fact that they were British was pointed out time and again. Dick Penson, in his 1967 book, *In One Ear*, regularly talks about this neighbour or that having

learned his trade in Britain and putting those skills to good use here. But we don't see that sort of thing in reference to people of other-European extraction. Presumably, they, too brought skills with them, but once here those origins didn't seem to matter. Their activities do get reported in the "Local and Personal" columns of the newspapers, but only extremely rarely is there any mention of where these settlers came from.

In September 1915, the newspaper merely stated that two members of "the Romano section crew" had joined the Italian army. There was no ceremonious send-off for these two young men, no details about the jobs and families they were leaving behind, no best wishes or optimistic assertions of the contribution they would make on the European battlefields, not even a mention of their names — a very stark contrast to similar departures by young men going to fight for Britain.

According to the newspapers, the "Germans" watched for "bruin" on Candlemas (Groundhog Day), and "the local Lutherans" occasionally held a meeting or planned church work. Otherwise, the fact of being German hardly registers — unless, of course, there was a war going on. Then, anyone of German or Austrian extraction became "enemy aliens" and their activities, no matter how routine or familiar, suddenly took on a sinister tenor.

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Interestingly, the few documents that clearly refer to someone being of European origin make it pretty clear: there was very little distinction made, by the British settlers, of the different European nations represented in the local population. If a person spoke English with an accent that was neither Canadian nor British, he or she seems to have been considered “German.” That person may, in fact, have emigrated from France or Switzerland or Poland, but by the time he arrived in the Creston Valley he had become “German.”

There are two exceptions to this general perception. Members of the Italian community seem to have been generally recognized as Italian — and generally well regarded, despite widespread prejudices against Italian settlers that show up from time to time. And, in later years, a section of the community of Canyon was referred to as “New Sweden” in recognition of the number of Swedish settlers there. To be honest, I think some of them may have been Norwegian, but it’s probably unfair to expect that kind of distinction from a population that did not even distinguish between French and Polish.

Was this nationalist oblivion, on the part of British settlers, deliberate? As far as Asian or First Nations populations, it might well have been. But with regards to other European nationalities, I think, for the most part, it was simply the result of belonging to the dominant world power of the time. After a couple centuries of British pre-eminence on every level — economic, political, military, social, religious — it is not surprising if British-born people across the empire did consider themselves a little more special than everyone else.

Deliberate or not, it was, nevertheless, a way of subtly excluding the “other.” Undoubtedly, those “others” did occasionally feel excluded and inferior, even at the best of times. And what about when times were not the best? When anti-German feeling was at its height, during the wars or immediately afterwards, what was it like for all those people of different European nationalities to be looked at with suspicion and loathing, by the neighbours they had worked alongside only a few months before?

When Europeans, from Germany and elsewhere, came to the Creston Valley to escape the dismal social and economic conditions of their war-torn homelands, they often came with nothing but their own resourcefulness and with little or no knowledge of the customs and language of their new home. That was challenge enough. How much more difficult was it to discover they had come to a community where, perhaps, they weren’t really all that welcome?

Or, maybe, the British settlers were in general very welcoming and supportive of other Europeans; maybe the



Creston Museum

An item from the June 28, 1940, Creston Review.

bias that shows up in the newspapers is merely the result of editorial style. But, precisely because of that bias, these questions are impossible to answer if one is relying solely on the newspapers.

That’s why the Creston Museum would like to invite anyone of non-British European origins to share their stories. Where are you (or your family) originally from? When and why did you leave? Why did you choose the Creston Valley? What were your challenges and experiences getting here, and living here?

We would like to gather these stories for the archives’ collection, and, with your permission, to present them in a special exhibit along with your photographs and memorabilia at the museum this spring. If you have a story to tell, please contact the museum at 250-428-9262 or crestonmuseum@telus.net. ■

A Poet Walks Among Us

Submitted by: Maureen Cameron

Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors Community Liaison

“I start with one line sometimes and go from there, or it might be two or three and go forwards or backwards. I never know which way it will go.”

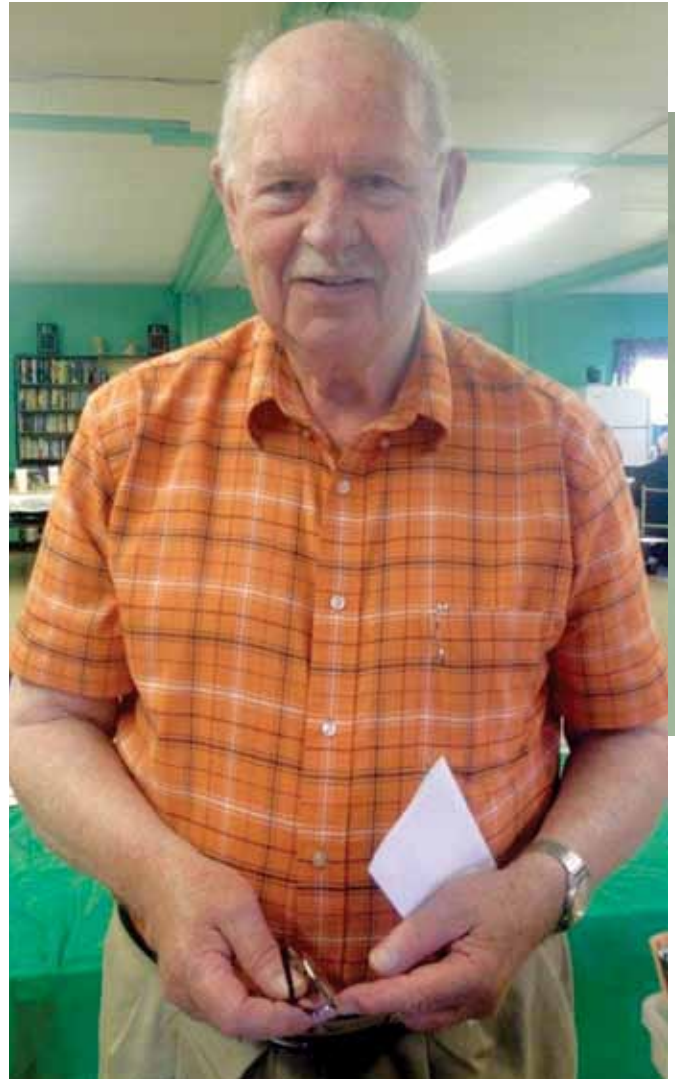
No, it's not a drawing strategy or dance move, it's Frank Brummet responding to the question, “So, how do you start to write?”

Poetry! For some, a natural inclination; for others, a mystery to be admired; and for Frank, a pleasure throughout his life.

Many of us recall writing a poem or two in our youth, but for Frank it's like that was the starting point. He says he's been writing for about 20 years. Friends and family have encouraged him over the years to publish from his collection of more than 100 poems.

“I'm not looking for fame, and besides, it's too late to be rich now,” he says (insert grin here).

Years ago, he did publish a chapbook to give away to friends, and as he does his research into publishing possibilities, there may be some options for him to consider. Not someone to toot his own horn, I remind him that his words are gifts for the rest of us, that we take pleasure in reading and hearing them as well. He confesses that that is really why he enjoys the open mike sessions. You may have heard Frank read



Submitted photo

Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors member Frank Brummet.

Bring this coupon in to receive 10% OFF all immune support products in our apothecary. Immune products include echinacea tinctures & glycerites, oil of oregano, fire cider, cough syrups, cold & flu baths and teas, propolis throat spray and vapour balms (custom blends not included in sale).

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“I’m not looking for fame, and besides, it’s too late to be rich now.”

Reminders

By: Frank Brummet

The silence of snow softly falling
Reminds me of the joy of Christmas,
Trimming the tree with decorations,
Wrapping presents in forever love,
Sharing feelings that never sway.

These reminders are with me always
They fill my mind, carry me away
To repaint the canvas of yesterday.

at coffee houses at the Canyon or Wynndel halls, where he says, “They haven’t kicked me out yet.”

When asked how he decides on the theme of a poem, he replied that “they just come to me.” Noting the frequent occurrence of seasonal and local references in his writing he says, “Yes, I love the seasons.”

On browsing through his chapbook, I see thoughtful poems reflecting his observations and reflections on life’s experiences: places, history, the passing of time, memory, nature and more.

“I haven’t been writing my own poems recently as I’ve been occupied rewriting

lyrics to popular old songs, like Five Foot Two, Down in the Valley, etc.” The June issue of I Love Creston featured his Creston version of Red River Valley. (We hope you ried singing it!)

Folks at TAPS have the privilege of singing his songs and hearing him read at weekly sessions and special occasions when he’ll write something specific for the celebration, bringing smiles with his humor, his sensitivity and on the spot turn of phrase. Did we mention his golden voice? ■

The Therapeutic Activation Program for Seniors is operated by Valley Community Services. For more information, call 250-428-5547 or 250-428-5585, or visit www.valley.services.



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Water Conservation

Story by: Carla Ahern,
 Director of Communications, Stewardship and Education
 Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area

After a very hot and dry summer, the topic of water became a very important and real discussion item. Sometimes it takes a little bit of a crisis, a shortage, for us to stop and think about the importance and necessity of water. Benjamin Franklin famously said, “When the well is dry, we know the value of water.”

As we all know, water is needed for survival of all living things. Look at the human body: our brains are 75% water, our blood is 82% water — even our bones are 25% water. So if we want those brains to function properly, we need water.

We tend to take water for granted in our neck of the woods because we have so much of it around. There is no need to worry about running out — water is everywhere. Attitudes about saving water and using it wisely depend on where you live in the world. Someone who lives in the Kalahari Desert in Africa is going to have a different perspective than someone from the Brazilian rainforest.

If you were to put all the world's water in a bathtub, the amount of water that is usable water (accessible freshwater) would fill slightly more than half a teaspoon. So while water is everywhere, there is a finite amount that is available to us.

As we watched water levels start to drop in the wetland in late May, a time when water levels are usually still on the rise, and smaller ponds dry up by August, it was a little disconcerting! August usually sees low water levels as the days get hot and rain is minimal, but we went into August at a disadvantage this year — water levels were at August lows in early July! It really made me think more about my water usage as I watched the water levels in the wetland steadily decline.

4,600 litres goes into producing one beef steak and 120 litres into a glass of wine

I have always erred on the conservation side when it comes to water usage and I think that is something we should all practice in daily life. It is no more effort to conserve; it just takes a few small changes in the daily routine and a shift priorities in certain areas.

A surprising fact I recently learned is that on average, 38 litres (14%) of your daily indoor water usage is lost to leaks. It's not realistic for most of us to just go out and buy all new water efficient fixtures right away, but fixing any leaks in existing faucets and toilets is an easy fix. Other easy conservation measures include: shorter showers (with a low flow shower head if possible), flushing the toilet less (and retrofit tank with a brick to displace water so not using as much per flush), turning off water when brushing teeth and waiting for a full load before doing laundry.

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While having a lush green lawn can be nice, I question if it is necessary. We usually look forward to the dry summer months so that our lawn crisps up and we don't have to mow it as regularly! There are many measures you can take outside to minimize water usage: use soaker hoses on plants instead of sprinklers, water in early morning or evening, put mulch around trees and shrubs, and invest in drought tolerant and native plants.

Businesses and communities can make simple choices in their operations to conserve water too. For example, many agricultural operations are using more efficient irrigation systems that help conserve water. Technology and innovation for equipment and processes that help to conserve water have come a long way and are constantly evolving.

We have to be educated and aware of water usage and the various measures we can all take to be more water wise. I encourage you to go online and learn more about water usage — 4,600 litres goes into producing one beef steak and 120 litres into a glass of wine — and learn about innovative and new ways that you can conserve water and contribute to conscious water use policies and then share this information with your friends.

I think that these are real and needed discussions that should happen with our neighbors, communities, businesses and governments so that we can all be players in helping to conserve and protect a natural resource that is key to our continued survival. There are a lot of little things that we can all do that can add up to make a big difference. ■

Questions? Feel free to call 250-402-6900 (Admin) or 250-402-6908 (Wildlife Centre), or email askus@crestonwildlife.ca.



Club Offering Avalanche Training

Submitted by: Kokanee Country Snowmobile Club

Knowledge is power when it comes to backcountry snowmobiling. How often do you hear, "I don't need that fancy equipment, I don't ride in avalanche terrain." Terrain can and will slide even on the most modest of inclines. Do you know what to do in the event of an avalanche? Do your riding partners? It is important to have educated riders within your riding group, and never, under any circumstances ride alone.

Group dynamics play a huge factor in safety when it comes to backcountry riding. Choose ride companions who are educated, have the equipment and know how to use it, for you will depend on them should you be in an avalanche or injured and in need of assistance.

Opt for ride companions who make wise choices in all situations, even when "pow stoke" should surface.

"We are very lucky to have Trigger Point Snow Services coming to our valley to help us ride to survive."

Pow stoke is a term used to describe the intoxicated feeling a back country snowmobiler or skier experiences when faced with deep dry untouched powder. The urge to drop a shoulder and carve and climb can make an individual stop thinking and throw caution to the wind, especially when that deep dry powder comes after a period of drought. Keep your thinker on even when Mother Nature suddenly dumps large volumes of snow upon you.

Club will be hosting an avalanche skills training Level 1 course Jan. 16 and 17.

Consisting of classroom time and one field day, this in-depth class is snowmobile specific to really help snowmobilers play safe in the backcountry.

"Not many snowmobile specific AST 1 classes are available, with riders often having to travel hundreds of miles to attend. We are very lucky to have Trigger Point Snow Services coming to our valley to help us ride to survive," says KCSC president Trish Drinkle.

Special membership pricing is available and the club is working hard to find extra funding to make this class affordable for everyone.

The most recent death by avalanche in our area was in March 2014. The Kokanee Country Snowmobile Club wants to ensure all riders in the area are prepared and know before they go. ■

For more information, contact Trish Drinkle at 250-428-7531 or tdrinkle@yahoo.ca.

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The Colours of Christmas

Submitted by: Blossom Valley Singers

Green, red, orange and yellow, blue, gold, silver and white.

"The Colours of Christmas" by John Rutter is the theme song for this year's Christmas concert by Creston's popular

community choir, the Blossom Valley Singers. This year's music selection will entertain everyone with a variety of traditional and current Christmas songs. The colour blue takes a ladies' ensemble on a shopping frenzy, while

Rudy (a.k.a. Rudolph) has never been so much fun in red. The traditional holly carols cover the green, and expect some white snow related music as well. A Calypso carol from the West Indies and the traditional spiritual "Amen! Tell it on the Mountain" liven up the concert.

The choir again will be conducted by Anita Stushnoff and accompanied by Monte Anderson, two of the most talented musicians and teachers in the valley.

The choir will welcome some special guest artists, including children's voices to round out a very entertaining Christmas concert.

There will also be the usual concert singalong of your favourite Christmas carols and once again, by popular demand, the finale will have you standing to the traditional "Hallelujah" chorus.

Both concerts last year were virtual sell-outs, so plan to get your tickets early from choir members or at Black Bear Books or Creative Fix. Concert dates are Friday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 13 at 2:30 p.m. ■



Submitted photo

The Blossom Valley Singers in their trademark Christmas concert.

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Ag Aware

Story by: Randy Meyer,
Creston Valley Agriculture Society

December is, for most farmers, a time to slow down. Finally! The hectic pace of the growing season with planting and harvesting, and everything in between is done for another year. The land is at rest. There are always tasks to be done, for sure, but the days are shorter and the pace is slower. Of course, for beef growers, dairymen and other livestock producers, feeding and caring for their animals continues throughout the winter. No matter what the weather is, the chores must always be done.

Speaking of weather, it seems to be a constant concern for all farmers, no matter what commodity you're involved in. This year has been especially challenging for many area farmers because of the extremely dry conditions for a large part of the growing season. It affected most crops grown in our valley. Fruit, vegetables, hay and grain crops all had yields affected and also their timing of harvest. Hopefully the rainy periods we have received this fall as well as the early wet snows will start a recovery of moisture levels in our soil for the crop season to come. The El Niño weather pattern that has been forecast could have a significant impact on how much

The diversity that we have here is impressive, with potential for even more, in my opinion.

moisture we do receive over the winter and into the coming spring. Time will tell, but we all hope for plentiful moisture to grow our next crops.

Besides uncertain weather, farmers are waiting to see what changes will be in store for us from our new federal government. The Liberal campaign was all about "change". Probably the first agenda item for the government that pertains to agriculture will be whether to ratify the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal or not. I expect they will. Depending on what commodity you're involved in, this deal could either be quite beneficial or detrimental. New trade opportunities could be good for beef,

grain or fruit exports, but the threat of cheaper imports could harm dairy and poultry producers. There are so many unknowns in this trade deal at this time that we really don't know what to expect going forward.

On a recent trip to Saskatchewan, it really got me thinking about how small our agriculture here really is. Small farms, small land base. Out on the prairie you drive for hours and the farmland stretches as far as you can see in all directions. Huge farms, huge land base. Here we can see across our valley. The horizon is not too far away. Yet our farms and farmers are all important to the economy of this valley. The diversity that we have here is impressive, with potential for even more, in my opinion. The orchards and vineyards, the beef and dairy operations, grain and hay and all the market gardens, as well as the niche market and value-added ventures. All have their place in helping support families in our valley. With all the difficulties in the Canadian economy, the relative stability of agriculture and food production is a good news story.

On behalf of the Creston Valley Ag Society, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a happy Holiday season, and best wishes in 2016. Remember to continue to be Ag Aware! ■

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Christmas merry and bright with Mane and Nails

By: Trish Drinkle

While the holiday season is filled with laughter and excitement, most will agree there is a certain amount of stress that surfaces this time of year. Mane and Nails, owned and operated by Jo Ann White, has some helpful solutions to keep Christmas merry and bright!

Events, parties and family gatherings can wreak havoc with hair health. Continual curling, straightening and washing can damage hair. It is important to keep your body hydrated and hair moisturized.

Consider doing a deep condition treatment after hair has been overworked. You can further magnify the conditioning process by covering hair with a plastic bag during the treatment, allowing the moisturizing effects to penetrate deep into the hair shaft. Serums, especially the L'anza neem serum, are a great way to add extra moisturizing properties to hair without weighing hair down like some oil treatments do,

causing hair to appear limp and oily.

If you are experiencing the in-between frustrations of growing hair out, hair extensions are a quick and easy solution to ease the frustration. When applied by a certified expert, hair extensions look and feel like real hair, giving you luscious locks without the wait time. Quality hair extensions, such as the Hot Headz line Mane and Nails stylist Katelyn Madden applies can be styled and cared for like naturally grown hair. Again, it is important to keep extensions hydrated as you would your own real hair.

Mane and Nails now has integrated red light therapy combined with tanning bulbs in its relaxing light therapy bed. Red light technology stimulates collagen, heals scars and promotes deep tissue circulation — a great pick-me-up for the winter blues!

If you're looking for a gift of wellness this Christmas season, Mane and Nails has everything under one roof. Gift certificates are available! ■



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Entering Winter

Story by: Maya Skalinska
Master Herbalist, Registered Herbal Therapist

Transitioning into winter can be challenging. Short days, long nights, damp cold going straight into your bones. These can all get you down, but there are a few simple measures you can do to counteract the cold and dark, helping you enjoy the winter months.

Deficiency in vitamin D can lead to depression. I recommend a high quality cod liver oil as it naturally contains vitamin D and omega 3 essential fatty acids. You can also take a vitamin D3 supplement, 2,000IU taken with an omega 3 supplement. Make sure you get an assortment of omega 3 (naturally available in fish) and omega 6. If you don't eat fish, flax oil is a good option.

St. John's wort is also very effective for Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) as it's a mild antidepressant. I recommend it in a tincture form, made from fresh flowers. Do not take St. John's wort if you're already on antidepressants. If

you need a gentle pick-me-up, a nice hot tea made with herbs like lemon balm or holy basil are my favorite to lift up your spirits.

Other than keeping your spirits up, keeping warm is just as important. Stay away from cold foods like raw vegetables, ice cream, cold cereals and cold drinks. Instead, drink warm water, hot teas (ginger is best), hot cereals like oatmeal, lightly steamed veggies, soups and stews. Use warming ingredients like garlic, ginger, chili powder, turmeric, cinnamon or cloves. This will ensure your digestive fire is strong and going all winter long.

Of course, with winter also comes the cold and flu season, so keeping your immune system healthy is important. Besides the omega 3 and 6 and the vitamin D supplements, make sure you eat a nutrient dense diet, with all the colors of fruits and vegetables you can find. This will ensure you're getting

enough vitamin C and antioxidants from your food. My favorite nutrient rich superfoods are broccoli, blueberries, yams, bell peppers, thyme, parsley, kale and squash. If you are prone to infections, try medicinal mushrooms like reishi, chaga or turkey tail in powder or tincture form. For herbs, astragalus root is great as a tincture or tea simmered for 20-30 minutes. You can also add astragalus or medicinal mushrooms into your broths.

It's important to remember that as soon as you feel you might be coming down with something, like a tickle in your throat or low energy, take action right away. The faster you support your immune system, the faster it will work for you. Have a cold and flu tea or tincture on hand as you never know when a bug might hit you.

A warming whole food diet with a few supplements mentioned above will keep you and your family healthy and happy in the winter. ■

Maya Skalinska is a Master Herbalist, and a Registered Herbal Therapist, offering iridology, herbal medicine, nutrition consultations and flower essences in Crawford Bay and at Vital Health in Creston. For more information, or to book an appointment please call 250-225-3493.

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Lefts and Rights

Story by Jesse Moreton, BSc DC

Ever wonder what makes most people right-handed and others left-handed? Or which eye, foot or hand is dominant? Ever think about if there's a correlation between your dominant side and your back or neck pain? I may not have space or expertise to discuss all the answers, but I'll at least present some interesting ideas from the scientific literature.

First: Why are most people right-handed? Traditionally, the theory was gene related. The gene for left-handedness is recessive and, therefore, expressed less commonly. However, this notion does not fit with our current understanding of how genetics works. Another theory is that handedness is influenced by culture. We probably all know someone who, in a previous era, was forced by a teacher or parent to use the right hand.

Some researchers believe hand dominance is influenced during development. One brain hemisphere may receive slightly more oxygen than the other, even though they balance out by the time the fetus is fully developed. Other researches believe that in the brain

handedness is connected to speech, making mental processing more efficient. Since speech is usually controlled by the left-hemisphere (responsible for right-sided body control), most people are right-handed. But then the bigger question becomes, "Why is speech mostly left-hemisphere related?". The short story is that no one knows and it's likely a combination of many factors.

Next question: How do you know which eye, foot or hand is dominant? For most people, the hand is obvious, but it's still fun to try some tests. Try crossing your arms. Which one lays on top? Now interlock your fingers. Which thumb rests on top? What arm do use to drink or throw a ball?

Here's a couple for the foot: Run forward and jump off one leg. Which one did you use? Fall forward or backward. What foot came out to stabilize you first?

And a couple more for the eye: Which eye do you use to wink? Now extend your hands, and make a small triangular hole with your thumbs and index fingers. Focus on an object through the hole with both eyes open. Now close one eye. If the object does not move, that is your dominant eye. If it does, that's your non-dominant eye.

Last question: Do you have right-sided muscle and joint problems because you're right-handed? As a chiropractor, I find this the most interesting. The simple answer: It depends. One study found ankle injuries more common on the dominant side. It makes sense if you play basketball and lead with your dominant foot. Another study found forearm fractures more common in the non-dominant arm of boys.

Some patients will recognize me saying there's not always much rhyme or reason as to why muscles and joints flare-up. It's unsettling, but it's true. Sometimes the dominant side will flare up because it's overused. Sometimes the non-dominant side will cause problems because it's weaker and more susceptible to injury and strain. Sometimes right-sided hip pain will be relieved by lying on the left, sometimes by lying on the right! The same holds true for lying on the side with pins and needles in the arm. The body is complex and there are multiple bio-mechanical factors that influence what we feel. For most, it's a combination of development, previous history and injuries, repetitive actions and habits, and sometimes just bad luck.

So there you have it, just as confused as before! Still, it's interesting to wonder. ■

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Supplement Guards Against Travel Sickness

Submitted by: Vital Health

Remember the television ads for the iconic hotel chain with the slogan, “The best surprise is no surprise”? Unfortunately, the utopian perception of holiday travel, all-inclusive vacations and luxury cruises are not exempt from their own health and safety concerns. The image of 4,200 cruise-line passengers stranded for days in the Gulf of Mexico two years ago, without power or proper sanitation, is proof positive that being prepared for an emergency is essential, whether at home or during travel.

Vacations, especially winter ones, are treasured by Canadians. In fact, the anticipation of holiday fun and adventure can tack on a few weeks of happiness to the entire experience. In addition to the checklist of travel essentials that vary from sunscreen to traveler’s health

insurance, there are some natural health products you can take along to safeguard your dream vacation from becoming a nightmare.

Traveler’s sickness is the less graphic description of diarrhea caused from exposure to pathogenic bacteria while abroad; it’s among the most common health concerns for vacationers. In fact, it affects between 20% and 50% of international travelers, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Traveler’s sickness is most often caused by food or water that has been exposed to human feces, even in trace amounts. Several pathogenic bacterial strains — including *Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella*, and *Shigella* — are the most common causes of traveler’s sickness.

New Roots Herbal has developed a hybrid probiotic supplement specifically for protection from traveler’s sickness. Travelers’ Probiotic features 10 billion live cells of the probiotic yeast *Saccharomyces boulardii*. It works in several ways: it crowds out harmful micro-organisms, neutralizes bacterial toxins that contribute to diarrhea and exerts positive effects on the mucous membranes of the intestines that regulate selective permeability. Each enteric-coated capsule also contains 11 billion colony-forming units (CFUs) of our broad-spectrum probiotic blend, with over seven billion CFUs of two strains of *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*. This robust species produces compounds that actively disrupt *E. coli* from causing infection.

Grapefruit seed extract (GSE) is another roadworthy natural health product. It’s among the most effective and versatile broad-spectrum antimicrobial, antifungal, and antiparasitic natural health products. Its therapeutic applications span from treating dysbiosis (intestinal disturbances), topical use for athlete’s foot, and improving the safety of drinking water, along with making a great rinse for fruits and vegetables. GSE has been found to retain bactericidal activity at concentrations as diluted as 1:152.

With space at a premium, paring down the items to include in a vanity or shaving kit can be difficult. It may even require some skin-care essentials to be “voted off the island.” Tamanu oil is a versatile oil worthy of bringing along for a vacation or adventure. It’s a fast-absorbing, lightweight oil that hydrates the skin to reduce the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines. It’s also great for accelerating healing from cuts, scrapes, burns, and abrasion. Tamanu oil is truly the “tropical topical” indispensable for a weekend adventure or a holiday abroad. ■

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